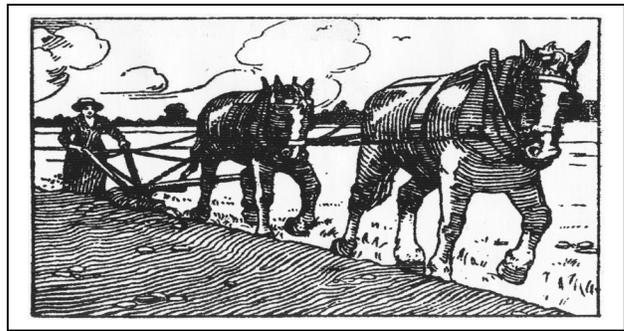


# North Creek Community Farm NEWSLETTER

## Week Thirteen Thursday Sept. 6



### Slow Food

Maddy and I deliberately ate what was in the bag this last week. It didn't take us too long to use it all up but we noticed that we are home to cook most meals. We had the time to cook from scratch both lunch and dinner. Not too long ago, most meals were prepared this way. On farms, someone was home to cook and the food was available.

We had been at a friends house and with their farm crew, and we made tortillas for lunch. These were "slow food" tortillas made from scratch. Together we cut still-soft hopi blue corn off the cob and cooked it with a little pickling lime for 10 minutes. Because this corn had not yet dried down, we didn't need to soak it longer than half an hour. After that it was rinsed well and run through Andy's corn grinder. This grinder is sold at Mercados or Mexican grocery stores to grind the Nixtamal as the soaked corn is called. The ground corn is then mixed with a little salt and as much water as is needed to make a dough. We then used a press to make thin flat rounds that we quickly fried on a hot cast iron griddle. These tasted so good. Its like comparing Wonder bread to artisan sour dough.

Not everyone has time to prepare their own tortillas, but it gives us a sense of what we loose for convenience and labor savings. In her book, *Radical Homemakers*, Shannon Hayes talks about "reclaiming domesticity from a consumer culture." In a capitalist society, we measure everything with money but sometimes it is worth measuring in flavor.

**Harvest Festival September 29 and 30. You choose the day. End of the Season Celebration. Details soon but save the date.**

### IN THE BAG:

Lettuce mix  
Arugula  
A few tomatoes  
Peppers  
Eggplants  
Shallots (like onions only sweeter)  
Potatoes – a mix including Yukon Golds!  
Chard  
Cilantro  
Onions

### About the vegetables:

Greens are returning, helped by the cooler weather. We have been running the irrigation as often as we can to coax them to tenderness. I am watching the new broccoli plants anxiously hoping that they will produce heads soon. So far they are happy just growing bigger and bigger plants.

Shallots are a separate species from onions. Originally, shallots could only be propagated by dividing the bulbs to multiply them. Because there are not very many divisions, this was costly. Seed is now available to grow shallots and they are quite easy to raise.

With the goodies that we are shipping this week, I made a great meal. I took the peppers and cut them into strips. Then I cooked them in a very hot cast iron skillet to sear them a little with about a tablespoon of oil. Then I turned down the heat and added one of the onions cut into strips. I stirred this around on medium heat until the onions and peppers were tender and caramelized a little. We had some left over salsa and had this with corn tortillas and some canned refried beans. Yum.

# Caramelized Shallots

Adapted from [Ina Garten](#)

6 tablespoons (3/4 stick) unsalted butter  
2 pounds fresh shallots, peeled, with roots intact  
3 tablespoons sugar  
3 tablespoons good red wine vinegar  
1/2 teaspoon kosher salt  
1/4 teaspoon freshly ground black pepper  
2 tablespoons chopped fresh flat-leaf parsley

Preheat the oven to 400 degrees F.

Melt the butter in a 12-inch ovenproof\* saute pan, add the shallots and sugar, and toss to coat. Cook over medium heat for 10 minutes, tossing occasionally, until the shallots start to brown. Add the vinegar, salt, and pepper and toss well.

Place the saute pan in the oven and roast for 15 to 30 minutes, depending on the size of the shallots, until they are tender. Season, to taste, sprinkle with parsley, and serve hot.

\* If yours, like mine, is not ovenproof, it works to start this dish in your frying pan then scrape the shallots and sauce into a baking dish when it's ready to go in the oven.

# French Swiss Chard

"This sounds so elegant & simple - such a lovely combination of easy-to-grow Swiss Chard & rosemary! Would make a lovely lunch with a couple of poached eggs & some buttery toasted chewy bread (a ha! another poverty meal!) Received in email from gourmet-recipes-from-around-the-world. Thanks, Char!"

- 1 bunch swiss chard
- 3 tablespoons butter
- 1 tablespoon olive oil
- 1 tablespoon fresh rosemary, chopped
- 1/3 cup raisins ( golden raisins especially nice)
- 2 tablespoons pine nuts
- salt, to taste
- black pepper, freshly-ground, to taste

## Directions

1. Remove the chard stems and the thick central vein from each leaf. Chop the leaves very coarsely.
2. Using a large, heavy-bottomed frying pan over medium high heat, melt the butter with the oil until sizzling. Add the chard and the rosemary, stirring well to coat the chard with the butter mixture. Cook, stirring constantly, for another minute until the chard has wilted to about half its original volume.
3. Add raisins and pine nuts, stirring to combine evenly, and continue cooking until any moisture has evaporated. The entire cooking process should take no more than about 3 minutes.
4. Season with salt and pepper and serve immediately.